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Seoul Seeks U.N. Help in Rift With North

By SUSAN CHIRA

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SEOUL, South Korea, Oct. 14 — President Roh Tae Woo of South Korea said today that he would ask the United Nations and its member countries to help bring about a reconciliation with North Korea that would ease tensions between the neighbors.

In an interview before the first address to the United Nations General Assembly by a South Korean leader, set for Tuesday, Mr. Roh seemed eager to take advantage of the good will engendered by the Olympic Games in Seoul to win backing for his overtures to North Korea, which have so far not made much headway with the Government in Pyongyang. Neither South or North Korea is a member of the United Nations, but both have observer missions there.

In an hourlong interview in the Blue House, his residence here, he discussed the foreign and domestic challenges that face his nation now that the Seoul Olympics have ended. Many Koreans had been reserving judgment on Mr. Roh until

after the Olympics, which served as a check on both the Government and the opposition.

"What we would like the United Nations to do, as a neutral third party, is use its good offices as a mediator," he said this afternoon. "Sometimes direct parties cannot agree because of mistrust and

pride. Just as in marriage counseling, we need a third party to arrange a satisfactory solution."

Mr. Roh is to meet with President Reagan on Thursday in Washington. His visit, the first since he took office in February, comes as relations between the two nations have been questioned in Korea.

A growing Korean national pride, fed by the Olympics, is prompting resentment over American pressure to open South Korean markets to American goods. Moreover, many Koreans chafe at the continuing presence of American military installations in downtown Seoul, and what many Koreans see as American arrogance.

At the same time, the Government is courting Communist nations it once considered enemies, as well as trying to improve relations with North Korea. During the Olympics, many South Koreans booed American athletes and cheered those from Communist countries.

While Mr. Roh acknowledged anti-American sentiment, he said

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the two nations would remain close and all feelings would dissipate. "Two people quarrel when they are very close," he said. "Brothers fight. You do not fight with those who are further apart. The Korean public has trusted and depended on American friendship. If their expectations are not met, they are more disappointed."

Mr. Roh has made a priority of improving relations with the North. While the two Koreas should continue to make efforts to resolve their own affairs, he said, the United Nations could also play an important role in bringing them closer together.

In July, Mr. Roh (his name sounds closer to "no" than Roh in Korean) announced a dramatic shift in policy toward North Korea intended to promote

trade and personal exchanges between the two nations and end the North's diplomatic isolation.

After a flurry of counterproposals by the North, the two sides embarked in August on their first talks in nearly three years. So far they have failed to agree on terms for a joint parliamentary meeting, but will talk again in November. While the South proposes building good will through family visits, trade and citizens' exchanges, the North wants a pledge of nonaggression and the eventual withdrawal of American troops.

Role for Other Countries

Mr. Roh said he would not specifically appeal for direct negotiations to be undertaken by United Nations officials such as the ones that produced cease-fires in Afghanistan and in the Persian Gulf between Iran and Iraq. But he suggested that he would be willing to accept any help in reaching out to North Korea — either from the United Nations or from member countries who have relations with North Korea or have security interests on the Korean peninsula.

"The United Nations has earned the respect of the international community by assisting in the solution of international disputes," he said. "Based on this, I think the United Nations can find some role by itself in the Korea question. Other countries individually can also play some role."

His aides said he would appeal to nations with security interests in the peninsula — presumably the United States, China and the Soviet Union — to help promote talks between the Koreans.

The surge of anti-Americanism, he said, springs both from South Korea's new freedom of expression and from changes in its relationship with the United States.

"Some people do not yet understand we have reached a very horizontal relationship, instead of the traditional vertical relationship with the United States — especially students do not understand this," he said, referring to a relationship among equals instead of the former one where the United States had a dominant role. "But the trends toward democracy and development of a free market will proceed to make this very meaningless, and within a short time we will be able to overcome these difficulties."

The next several months will test not only Mr. Roh's foreign policy, but his commitment to change at home as well. His accommodating manner and his deliberate rejection of his predecessor's imperious style have won him measured praise even from opposition leaders. But many Koreans, made cautious by a history of brief spells of freedom followed by coups, will be closely watching post-Olympic politics.

haunted by the past, and it is the examination of that past that will help shape the future. The opposition-controlled legislature, elected in April with new powers, has begun investigations into charges of corruption and abuses of power during the Government of former President Chun Doo Hwan.

In just one example, newspapers have begun printing articles about "re-education camps," where the Chun Government sent vagrants as well as some political dissidents for forced labor and political training.

Such investigations are potentially explosive because they could implicate senior Government and military officials and may serve to remind the public of the close links between Mr. Roh and Mr. Chun — his unpopular predecessor, former ally and close friend. President Roh has taken great pains to distance himself from a past he helped to shape without completely breaking with Mr. Chun, who picked him as his successor.

Ruling party politicians have urged

Mr. Roh to ask Mr. Chun to answer questions before the National Assembly, South Korea's legislature, and to issue an apology for any past misdeeds. Today Mr. Roh said the Government would cooperate with investigations, but he said he would not intercede.

Mr. Roh dismissed fears that the investigations could touch off a political crisis and a return to authoritarianism. He pointed to a number of democratic changes that have already taken place in little more than a year — the nation's first direct presidential election in 16 years, its first opposition-controlled legislature, substantially increased press freedoms and a better human rights record.

His critics assert that a number of political prisoners remain in jail and that many released have not yet been allowed to vote or take part in politics. And they fear that South Korea's powerful intelligence agencies may continue to harass opponents of the Government.

U.N. Settles Dispute On Korean Speeches

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UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 14 — It took weeks of high-level negotiations, but finally a compromise was worked out allowing both South and North Korea to address the General Assembly next week, diplomats say.

Neither North or South Korea, which both have nonvoting observer status at the United Nations, may speak without approval of a majority of members. Late this summer the United States, supported by Japan and eight other nations, said it would ask the General Assembly to invite South Korea to speak to mark its 40th anniversary.

The Soviet Union, China and other Communist countries immediately replied that they were strongly opposed. Even before the Soviet objection, South Korea said it would welcome an appearance by North Korea before the General Assembly as well. North Korea refused the offer.

But, diplomats say, the Soviet Union and China eventually drew back from the confrontation and forced North Korea to accept the compromise South Korea had offered all along, under which the two Koreas would both address the General Assembly. There was no explanation for the reversal.

As a result, President Roh Tae Woo of South Korea will address the General Assembly on Tuesday. But in an unusual protocol twist seen by most diplomats here as an expression of North Korean pique, a man who is of considerably lower rank — First Deputy Foreign Minister Kang Sok Ju of North Korea — will speak Wednesday.